

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 3, 121, 122, and 128-130 are pending in the application.

Claims 1 to 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fischer et al. (US 5,975,260). The rejection is based on the Examiner's attempt to read claim 1 of the present application on Figures 1 and 9 and associated parts of the specification of the Fischer et al. reference. Specifically, the Examiner found that "Fischer (Fig. 9) discloses a hydrokinetic torque converter comprising a housing (605), wherein the housing includes radially directed grooves which terminate outside an outer radial border and inside an inner radial border (608 and 609 constitute grooves and are part of the housing as shown in Fig. 9)."

In their response (filed March 18, 2004) to the office action of December 3, 2003 (paper No. 15) Applicants argued that the grooves in Fischer et al. (US 5,975,260) are clearly not radially directed, so that Fischer et al. lacks at least the feature of radially directed grooves and therefore fails to meet the criteria for anticipating claim 1. The Examiner replied on page 4 of the Final Office Action under "Response to Arguments":

"Applicants' arguments filed 03/18/2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Examiner believes grooves 608 and 609 are radially directed."

In response to the foregoing rejection and also in response to the Examiner's expressed belief that the grooves 608 and 609 in Fischer et al. are radially directed, Applicant's respectfully propose a further amended version of claim 1 as presented hereinabove. The recitation of "radially directed grooves configured in the manner of rays" should make it absolutely clear that the radially directed grooves of claim 1 are of the shape illustrated, e.g., in Figure 13 of the present application. In contrast, all of the groove patterns shown in any of the drawings and described in the Fisher et al.

reference are of a meandering shape. Consequently, Fisher et al. (US 5,975,260), lacking the feature of “radially directed grooves configured in the manner of rays”, fails to meet the criteria for anticipating claim 1. Thus, the rejection against claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fischer et al. should be withdrawn and, in the absence of further rejections, claim 1 should be allowed. Furthermore, claims 2 and 3 should be allowed because they depend on the presumably allowable claim 1.

Claim 128 (with dependent claims 129 and 130) has been amended so that it now depends on claim 1. Presuming that claim 1 (as amended herein) will be allowed, claims 128-130 should be allowable by virtue of their dependency on claim 1.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present amendment should be entered and considered by the Examiner since it only clarifies an existing claim element that the Examiner is thoroughly familiar with and has previously searched. Thus, the present amendment does not necessitate additional searching and/or deliberation.

Applicants appreciate the allowance of claims 121 and 122 and respectfully submit that all remaining issues of the Office Action of April 27, 2004 have been appropriately addressed by the foregoing amendment and remarks. Allowance of the present application with claims 1-3, 121, 122, and 128-130 is hereby earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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